

Golden rules for great food plots for wildlife

Head and shoulders
Photo of DC or
Soil Conservationist
here

By _____,
District Conservationist, Natural
Resources Conservation Service,
_____ County.

If you have harsh winters and want to help wildlife through them, food plots can help. But there are a few key rules you should follow in planning and planting the plots to attract and aid your favorite wildlife species.

Food plots near escape cover.

Food plots will tend to concentrate wildlife--both the species you want and the species you don't. If you're planting the plot so you can find a covey of quail or pheasants, you can bet that fox and other predators will also be looking in the prime feeding area for them. So escape cover needs to be close so that the food plot isn't a cruel trap for your favorite species.

Several small food plots are better than one larger one.

You'll get more diversity of species with more locations, and the escape cover will be closer to feeding wildlife. But larger food plots may be needed if you have heavy deer populations that wipe out the food supply before the winter is over. You want your food supply to be available to your favorite species all winter.

Guard against soil erosion.

Steeply sloping soils plowed or disced for planting are exposed to water and wind, and will erode if precautions aren't taken. See the NRCS to be sure the land is protected against erosion.

Plant food to attract and support the wildlife species you want.

Along with other recommendations, the NRCS office has information on the best foods to offer various wildlife species.

The three common types of food plots are annual grain plots; green browse plots, and fallow areas.

Corn, grain sorghum and forage sorghum are favorite grain plots for pheasants and quail. Green browse plots with pure stands of high-protein legumes and grasses are used by quail, pheasants, turkeys, songbirds and others. Winter wheat, rye, millets and buckwheat are favorites of migrating waterfowl. Fallow plots are disced or otherwise disturbed croplands that are tilled but not planted, that encourage new annuals and weeds to grow that are essential to young quail, turkey and many songbirds.

NRCS technical guides, available on the internet, suggest favored food sources.

For more information, stop at our office at _____ (Number) _____ (Street) _____ in _____ (city) _____, or visit the NRCS Wildlife Habitat Management Institute's website at www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov or the NRCS home web site at www.nrcs.usda.gov



A corn food plot near a wetland and wooded cover will be well-used by a variety of wildlife.

Wildlife Ways Did you know....



It's a myth that raccoons dip food in water to wash it or clean it before eating. The purpose is to moisten the food before eating.